

The Ayui Foundation is a non-religious, non-government organisation that provides a home, educational opportunities and future pathways for disadvantaged Akha hilltribe teenagers.



Director  
Sumalee Milne



## F rom the director

July 2013  
Chiang Rai

The new school year started in May, and saw a few changes at the hostel. Most of our Grade 9 graduates returned home or found work, and so we were able to accept ten new students. Towards the end of the school year, the former houseparents' strong religious beliefs caused some issues within the hostel and between the children and their families. It was agreed these beliefs were not in line with our policy of being a non-religious environment and it was best to part ways. I'd like to thank Tip and Lek for their work over the past three years and wish them all the best for the future. They have been a big part of the success of the hostel.

FOUNDATION



An Akha couple in their thirties, Wittaya Kajorn-ngamwilai and his wife, Nacha, or Tam, have joined the Ayui family as our new houseparents. They previously worked as houseparents at a small hostel in Mae Chan District so are fully experienced. Wit is a real handyman who likes to keep busy, and can also fix electrical

problems, while Tam can use the sewing machine and enjoys cooking and doing Akha embroidery. They have two children, Yawee (2) and Mark (4), who now attend kindergarten at the school across the road from Baan Ayui.

## INTRODUCING OUR NEW STUDENTS ★★

**Name:** Apichart Becheku, aged 12 in Grade 6

**Background:** Apichart enjoys playing sports and wants to be a policeman when he grows up. His parents grow coffee but do not have much money. He lived with his parents and is the second of three children. Apichart needs to improve his Thai language skills, as he came from a small, village school.



**Name:**

Asong Laecheku, aged 9 in Grade 3

**Background:**

Asong likes sports and fishing. He is the third of 5 children in the family, all boys. His parents grow rice and corn but his father is an opium addict so his mother has a heavy burden. Asong needs a lot of encouragement to go to school because he has to work hard on his Thai language skills which are below-level.



**Name:**

Chirawan Posaeng, aged 12 in Grade 7

**Background:**

Chirawan, nicknamed Dao, moved from a hostel in Chiang Mai province, where she lived for the last 2 years. Her parents are separated. Her mother wanted her back in Chiang Rai province, closer to her. Dao is the youngest of 2 girls; her older sister, and the family breadwinner now, works in Bangkok. Her mother grew rice and corn but had kidney stones removed last year and was told by doctors she should stop doing heavy farm work. Dao loves reading and is very mature for her age.



**Name:**

Malissa Chermeu, aged 10 in Grade 4

**Background:**

Malissa lived at home with her parents, and is the eldest of 5 children. She enjoys looking after her siblings. Her parents grow corn and coffee but they fight often so Malissa is glad to have found a more peaceful environment at Baan Ayu. She is a happy girl who likes participating in all hostel activities.



**Name:**

Orathai Amor, aged 12 in Grade 5

**Background:**

Orathai, nicknamed Biw, is a very quiet girl. She lived with her aunt, the mother of a girl who has also moved into the hostel. Orathai's parents separated when she was 9 after her father was jailed for drug use. Her mother took her younger sister but left her with her aunt. She no longer has much contact with her parents, who are in Bangkok and has no place she calls home.



**Name:**

Sida Armo, aged 12 in Grade 7

**Background:**

Sida is the third of four children, all girls. Her mother also raises Sida's cousin, Orathai. Her father recently left for a 3-year construction job in Taiwan, where many Akha men go to try and earn money to bring or send back to their families. Therefore, her mother will be raising the children on her own so she brought Sida and her cousin to stay at the hostel.



**Name:**

Tanongsak Yaelongku, aged 12 in Grade 4

**Background:**

Tanongsak, like many Akha boys, likes to shoot birds with a slingshot and climb trees during his free time. He lived with his family - his parents and an older brother from his mother's previous marriage. He is a good-natured boy but needs to work on his Thai language skills.



**Name:**

Supornchai Yoethongku, aged 12 in Grade 6

**Background:**

Supornchai, nicknamed Boy, loves playing soccer and is an easygoing boy. His parents separated and he has no more contact with his father, who lives in the Mae Sai/Burma border area. His mother remarried a man who has 2 children already. There is a big drug problem in his village and his mother brought him to the hostel to shield him from bad influences in the village, as he is the only boy in the family.



**Name:**

Nichakarn Nantasen, aged 11 in Grade 5

**Background:**

Nichakarn's parents separated when she was born. Her older sister lives with her father, who is Thai, and her mother's remarried with other children. She lives in Bangkok and occasionally contacts Nichakarn, nicknamed La. La has been raised by her grandmother, and lived with her grandmother, her grandmother's brother and his wife and son. Her grandmother brought her to Baan Ayui because there is a drug problem in her village and she can't afford to care for her.



**Name:**

Jurelak Yaechokoo, aged 11 in Grade 5

**Background:**

Jurelak, nicknamed Gigi, has a younger sister and an older brother, who helps their mother grow corn and rice. Last year, Gigi's father died of cancer. Since then, this is the third hostel Gigi has moved to. The first was far out of town, difficult for her mother to visit, and the second was just for a month because they couldn't afford the hostel fee. Gigi's mother is happy to have found Baan Ayui.



On behalf of the new students, we'd like to thank Monica Keller from Switzerland for sponsoring Nichakarn, Monika Mueller, also from Switzerland, for sponsoring Boy, Khun Majuree Sinthuchat in Chiang Rai for sponsoring Gigi, and a generous sponsor from Singapore, who'd like to remain anonymous, for deciding during his visit to sponsor seven of the new students.



L to R: Sida, Apichart, Dao, Tanongsak, Orathai, Malissa, Asong, Nichakarn, Gigi, Boy)

**OUR ACTIVITIES**



Doing Akha embroidery

2013/05/14 14:49



Leaf prints

2013/05/14 20:39





★ ★ ★ ★ **THANK YOU** ★ ★ ★ ★

- ★ Thank you to all our child sponsors for renewing their sponsorship for the new school year.
- ★ We are using Yvonne Pilloni's donation that she specified to be used for the older students' educational costs, to pay for a Chinese tutor for our two oldest girls in Grade 10, who are majoring in Chinese and English.
- ★ On June 5 we were visited by a Singaporean man who donated umbrellas, as it is the rainy season, and lots of school and art supplies. Both have already been put to good use.
- ★ Thanks to former sponsors, Australians Chris Payne, for his regular monthly donations over the past few years, and Nick Staniforth for his donation.
- ★ During Easter, local bakery 'Baker's Delight' at Woden Shopping Center in Canberra, Australia, sold hot cross buns to raise funds for the Ayui Foundation.
- ★ Finally, thank you to Richard and Serena Hields, in Singapore, for their generous donation of \$3000 that will be used to build more toilets for the girls.

**If you would like to visit or support us please contact:  
Sumalee Milne - [ayui.foundation@gmail.com](mailto:ayui.foundation@gmail.com) - [www.ayui.org](http://www.ayui.org)**

**Thank you for thinking of us.**

*Without regular funding, we rely solely on small grants and donations and, therefore, try to keep expenses as low as possible. If anyone is able to support the hostel for a month at a time, our monthly average expenditure is B60,000. All donations and fundraisers are welcome.*

**Donations transferred to**

Australian bank account:  
Bendigo Bank

**Acc no:** 133516195 **BSB:** 633-000

Thai bank account:  
Siam Commercial Bank

**Acc no:** 5072669424



Tax deductible donations in Australia cheques to: Rotary Australia Overseas Aid Fund  
(46/2007-8) Ayui - & mailed to: Garry Gunnell, PO BOX 807, Strathfieldsaye VIC 3551  
(with donor's address clearly written)

